

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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LOUIS DRAYCOTT.

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CHAPTER II. KEEPING VIGIL.

THE night has deepened to a murky darkness. The flame of the lamp above the prison gateway is beaten, shuddering, from side to side by the wind that has risen to a heavy gale; rain, that stings and bites, plashing on the pavement and then rebounding with its own violence, makes it a hard time for travellers; and the storm, having followed hard on the heels of a fine and quiet evening, has taken people by surprise. A policeman saunters along slowly and calmly, as though it were a summer night, and rain and wind were mere matters of the imagination.

His beat lies near and around the prison, and he is one used to prison ways, and apt to hurriedly "move on" any skulker who may see fit to hang about the postern. It is, indeed, a shock to him, and brings him pretty smartly to a standstill to see that postern—usually so jealously closed at that late hour—open in a furtive kind of way, as if somehow ashamed of itself and conscious of a dereliction from the straight path of duty, to see the head of George Bramble protrude—also furtively—into the wind and the rain; and, still further, to see a slight, female figure, wrapped in a long, dark cloak, step through the gateway that shuts promptly behind her, and leaves her to do battle with the storm as best she may.

Forlorn and solitary enough looks this woman, as she wrestles a moment with the cloak that has suddenly taken to en-

wrapping her like a winding-sheet and impeding her progress. She succeeds in loosening the clinging folds, and then it bellies out behind her, threatening to throw her backwards, and has to be caught and held tightly across her breast.

By this time the policeman is by her side, and has turned his bull's-eye lantern upon her. The light is blurred and dimmed by the rain upon its round glass disc; but for all that he can see the woman's face, and it seems to be familiar to him. It is pale and wan, and across the dark parted hair, lies the pitiful symbol of widowhood.

The policeman, standing right in the woman's pathway, pulls a narrow leather-bound book from under his cape, while his lantern, set down upon the flags, looks like a lighthouse in a shallow sea; but in an instant the woman has hold of his arm, and her white face is uplifted to his.

"No—no," she says, panting as she speaks, "don't report George; don't report me. It's for no harm I've broke rule and come out so late. There's a des'put need for me to be let out; a sorry, des'put need, or George wouldna' have broke rule. I don't look like a woman as is after mischief, do I? I'm too sorrow-laden to be after any harmful ways. Anybody may see that. I'm the widow of him as was—hung for murder here a month or two back. 'Tain't likely I'd come out like this if there wasn't a des'put need. I'm that hasted that every minute seems like an hour. Don't go for to keep me."

Her limp black skirts are blown against his legs; her eyes are wild; her lips shake as she speaks. The man has a wife and children at home. He puts the book back under his cape, and, stooping to lift his lantern, bids the night-bird spread her wings and fly.

"Go your ways," he says, gruffly, "and Heaven help you, my lass, for it's a fearful night!"

With a low, incoherent cry she speeds along: the wind flutters her skirts, and the cloak seems hard to manage. He can hear her feet splash in the deep pools and puddles; he can see her, wraith-like, in the whirl and mist, going further and further down the dark street; see her, intermittently, as she passes this wind-shaken flicker of lamplight or that. Now he can see her no more.

"That's a rum go," he mutters gruffly to himself, as he sets off once more on his rounds. "She's a plucky one, she is, and after no mischief, not she! I'll take my dick o' that. I'm glad the rain's slackened a bit, poor lass, for her sake! Well, now! fancy having her man hanged, and havin' to tell t' little 'uns when they grow to be big 'uns."

He goes on in silence, taking the opposite way to that in which the white-faced woman in shabby, fluttering black garments has disappeared.

But he cannot dismiss her from his mind. He turns, stands, gazes eagerly ahead, as though he half expected to see the slight figure still doing grievous battle with wind and rain.

No, the street is empty: a long length of shining flagstones, with flickering gas-lamps at intervals, accentuating the darkness in between.

It is not, however, silent; for, now far, now near, from the street that runs cross-wise just at the spot where Bessy was lost to view, comes the sound of that ghastly cry familiar to every Londoner as one of the most unpleasant "voices of the night." How weird does it sound, the cry of the news-vendor making unholy profit by appealing to one of the worst passions of humanity—the craving to hear some new horror, and gloat over its every detail!

"Ter-ri-ble tra-ge-dy! Ter-ri-ble tra-ge-dy!"

Now it comes nearer, now stops, now rings out again.

"Ter-ri-ble tra-ge-dy!"

"Drat the man," grumbles the policeman, pacing moodily on, and still thinking of the woman who came through the postern at such an hour, "drat the man and his bawling! Ain't there tragedies enough locked up in that there place, without him bringing word of another to help the rest? Like enough it's a lie; but I hate the sound on't. I wish he were abed in

the casual ward, and his papers stuck atop o' the fire, that I do!"

Fainter and fainter grows the cry, till it sounds like an echo in the distance.

We are told that Sargon, the great Chaldean King, had a favourite malediction which he was wont to hurl at the heads of his enemies, that is, at the heads of those whom he specially hated.

It ran thus:

"May he sit bound at the feet of his foe!"

One has to think it well over before the full bitterness and malice of this pithy curse is realised.

To be helpless—tied and bound—unable to stir hand or foot, in the presence of one who hates you; to feel the iron enter into your soul, and for Fate to say: "You can do nothing—there is no remedy—you are helpless."

It was thus with Louis Draycott, as, from beneath her manacled hands, the narrow eyes of Rebecca, his wife, peered into his own—the eyes he had believed to be long since closed in death, and shrouded for ever from the light of the sun.

The blow had been terrible—the shock unspeakable. But the man was no coward; the manliest, truest courage was ingrained in him, and did not fail him even in such a supreme moment as that of this fatal and most unlooked-for meeting.

After that one bitter moment of recognition, he gathered himself together, and, by what seemed a miracle of fortitude to those looking on, in reply to the torrent of jeers and mocking gibes poured out upon his devoted head by the woman before him, spoke to her calmly, and with a marvellous dignity and power.

"Stand back," he said, "and stop that jargon; it is contrary to rule, and will bring severe punishment upon you. I will listen to all you have to say, if you will speak quietly."

"You were always a cool hand," she said, not without a certain reluctant admiration in her tone.

Then she let fall her fettered hands with a sharp jangle, and stepped back to her place beside the cot.

"You're not going to deny that I'm your wife, are you?" said the woman, sullenly, cowed by his resolute aspect.

"Certainly not. You are my wife, Rebecca Fordyce Draycott, whom I believed to be dead."

The Matron, standing near—a quiet,

Quaker-like figure, in her grey dress and white apron—gave a little cry at this, and the two wardresses huddled up to her side in fear and trembling.

They had seen and heard many strange things in their prison life; but never, never anything like this! One remembered to have seen a play something the same, and been so thrilled by it, that she could not sleep all night. The other bethought her of the beautiful young lady whom old David had told them of—the lady whom the Chaplain was “sweet on,” who looked as if she were “made of chinay,” and had knelt by the old man’s bed, and “blest him wonderful.” What of her, now that this terrible woman claimed to be Mr. Draycott’s wife, and Mr. Draycott—

But here her train of thought was broken into, for the Chaplain spoke again:

“Have you the key of the wrist-chains, Mrs. Graham?”

The Matron drew the key from a long pouch, wherein many rattled, and held it out to him.

“Set her free,” he said, shortly, turning aside so as not to watch the process.

The Matron seemed to hesitate. The wardress, who had seen the play, spoke up, though trembling:

“She may do you a mischief, sir.”

“No, she will not.”

The turn of the key in the handcuffs made a grating sound; the chain clanked as the Matron set the strong, lithe hands free.

“Now,” said the Chaplain, “I will ask you all to leave me alone with—my wife.”

Blank looks passed between the three women, then the youngest wardress hid her face upon her hands, sobbing.

Every heart within those grim, dark walls loved him; every soul was drawn to him. It was a common saying among the prison staff that there had been none like him in the past, and would be none like him ever again, when the day came that he must part from them. Bitter, then, was it to those three trembling women to be told to quit the cell, and leave him alone with that unchained fury whom he called “his wife”; bitter to them to feel that in this dark and cruel hour they were helpless to be of any good to him.

They huddled together like frightened sheep, hesitating, unwilling, almost ready to defy him.

The woman seated on the cot watched them, quick-witted enough to take in the

position of things, hardened enough to find some amusement in it, too, since a harsh laugh broke from her lips as she looked from them to the Chaplain, and back again.

“Will you not do as I ask you?” said Louis Draycott, gently.

The Matron made a gesture with her hand, dismissing the other two. Then she went herself to the door, and stood there. Her face was white as milk; her mouth twitched as she spoke.

“You know the rule, sir,” she said, quaking.

“Yes. Go out—and—lock the door.”

The next moment the key turned and grated in the lock.

They tell us that in women curiosity is a passion; and in each cell door was a spy-hole, the lid of which could be shifted by any one in the corridor; but it may be safely said that if the Chaplain had remained in the “remand” cell half the night, not a hand would have raised the disc, not an ear would have been strained to catch the echo of a word uttered there.

The wardress on duty took her place at the end of the gallery; the Matron spoke a word or two to Bessy, who still stitched by the flickering light, and Bessy, who had Bobby fast asleep upon her lap, rose with him in her arms, and followed the grey-gowned figure out of sight.

The “bad case” was quiet enough now. No sound of cry or mocking laughter broke the stillness; nothing save the sigh of the wind, and now and again the sharp patter of the rain on the skylight overhead.

When the time came for the wardress to go her last rounds, before retiring for the night, a slight tap at the door of the remand cell warned her to unlock the door. This she did, trembling still, and, at sight of the Chaplain crossing the threshold, and stepping out into the corridor, was ready, as she said afterwards, to “fall into a swoon,” so changed and drawn was his kindly face; but he spoke as gently as was his wont, and when he saw she could not restrain her tears, laid his hand a moment on her shoulder.

“She will be quiet enough now,” he said.

Ten minutes later all lights were out, and the riotous prisoner lay like a log upon her cot, her hard bright eyes staring into the darkness, her breath coming fitfully, as that of one who longs to weep, yet will not let the “climbing sorrow” have its way.

Meanwhile, Louis Draycott has passed down the gallery, crossed the covered way that separates the women's side of the prison from the men's, and, walking slowly and wearily, like one who has journeyed far and can scarce reach the bourne for which he is bound, gained his own quarters. He left that quiet room one man, he enters it another.

There, on the table, lies his open diary; beside it, the pen he laid down when he had traced there sweet and precious words of hope and love. His little reading lamp, with the shade Aunt Dacie's deft fingers had made and painted in cunning pattern of field flowers as a "surprise" for him, stands by the book, casting a soft light upon its record.

He is dazed, bewildered, faint, too, now that the need for immediate action is over.

Passing his hand across his brow, he staggers a moment, then, steadying himself by a mighty effort, reaches the low lounge chair by the fire, and there sinks exhausted. There is no one to comfort him, no one to tend him.

All at once he becomes conscious of a few drooping flowers that lie against the breast of his coat. They are violets, placed there by Mazie's hand only a few hours ago. Then they were fresh and fair; now they are drooping and broken like the hopes they well may symbolise. He presses them madly to his lips, then, still clasping them in his hand, falls into utter stillness.

The night grows cold; the fire dies out—grows to a heap of dull, grey ashes, with only a creeping sparkle here and there. The dark head is thrown back against the chair; the eyes that have looked so tenderly on the sufferings of others, look dim and hollow as though hours had done the work of years, and stolen all their youth, and light, and hope.

So far, the stricken man has not felt much. He has been numbed; he has been like the creature whom a dream mocks with the semblance of a joy or a pain that dazes, but does not convince. It all seems so unreal—himself the most unreal of all. If he had really lost Mazie; if the beautiful past were dead in very truth, slain by the hand of a cruel fate, could he be sitting here, still and silent, without moan or cry?

Surely he was full of fancies to-night. He had fancied he heard the postern open and shut at an hour no such thing could be; he had fancied he heard Mazie singing ever so soft and low; he had even caught

—always in his fancy—the words of the song she sang: "Herz mein Herz—warum so trübe?"

His brain was going through the painful process that is inevitable after a dire and terrible shock; mingling fancy with reality, but gradually awakening to a sense of the reality of things all through.

The little prison sparrows outside—merry little creatures, in spite of their grim abode—begin to sing the best matins they know—a series of short, sharp chirpings that mean the pale dawn is not far off. The lamp has burnt low for lack of oil; the gas shows a sickly flare in the growing light; and, as though the coming of the day were bringing mental as well as actual light, the solitary watcher suddenly casts off the fever of dull dreamings, and finds himself face to face with a naked and hideous reality.

He springs to his feet—his feet so numbed they scarce can bear him—he throws up his arms in an abandonment of despair.

"My God!" he cries, "My God! how can I tell her?"

His own sorrow, his own agony of loss, what does that count beside the thought of his darling's pain? He does not cry: "How can I bear it?" but only: "How can I tell her? How can I wound the gentle heart that loves me?"

Then a sense of utter loneliness comes upon him—the loneliness of the years that are coming overshadows him—the years without the clinging of his darling's arms about his neck, without the touch of her lips on his, without the clasp of her hand, without the sight of her face.

For he knows that it must come to this.

All this must be set aside. Against this verdict there was no appeal. If they had loved each other in silence and submission, if there had always been some barrier between them from the first that allowed of loyalty and tenderness, yet forbade hope, things might have been different.

But to have been plighted lovers, to have held Mazie in his arms, his promised wife, to have looked forward to that life together which even in anticipation had seemed so sweet a thing, and then to have to fall back into the old relations, holding no promise of a day to come! He knew that to put a woman through such an ordeal was to see her droop and die; he knew that for both it would prove a strain too great for human hearts to bear.

This man was one to face all things unflinchingly; and now he knew that he must leave her, this dear love of his; that he must rend her, not from his heart—that could never be—but from his life.

They would both find plenty of work to do in the world, though they should walk for ever "under altered skies," he was sure of that; sure, even in the midst of this awful anguish of desolation.

Just as the action of the sea rounds a jagged stone into perfect symmetry and smoothness, so does sorrow mould a character, softening every angle. Louis Draycott had suffered bitterly in the past, and sorrow had taught him how to suffer in the noblest way. Now he thought but little of his own pain, his own loss; prayed but scant prayers for himself. Thoughts and prayers, pity and longing were all for her.

The silence grows oppressive to him. He paces from end to end of the room, that looks grey and ghastly in the grey dawn-ing. He is glad of the sound of the clock that ticks upon the mantelshelf; glad of the sooty sparrows that chirp outside his window.

The day is coming, the day that brings with it an ordeal almost too terrible to be faced.

See, he is kneeling now before the open book that lies upon his table, where the lamp has burnt itself out. His face is hidden on his arms; but he is not weeping. No sob shakes that bowed form, no tear comes to soften the burning of the eyes, the throbbing of the aching brow.

Oh, ghastly light of day, creeping in through the high, narrow window, touching the dark head, the kneeling form, the hands that clench upon what they touch, as though to find some help and stay in things inanimate, surely there are few sadder sights in all the great and crowded city this morning, than the one your pale grey beams illumine in this prison chamber!

Brighter and brighter grows the dawn-ing. The storm of the night has passed. The scud has drifted elsewhere. There is a faint pale rose in the east, and then, to Louis Draycott, comes the summons no faithful priest can refuse to hear.

There is a low, hurried knocking at the door, which opens before there is time to bid the intruder enter, and George Bramble, looking white and scared, stands within the threshold.

Now, there are strange "notions" abroad in the prison as to the "ways" of the Chaplain; and George is hardly surprised to find him on his knees, even at this early hour of the morning; but, as Mr. Draycott rises, and stands supporting himself against the table, George grows whiter and more scared-looking than before. There was not a warder or wardress in all the prison who did not know the story of what had happened in the remand cell before "lights out" the previous night. But the tale had not yet reached the porter's lodge, and so George came quickly to the conclusion that sudden illness had fallen upon Mr. Draycott, and given him such a strange, unfamiliar look; made him so red-eyed and haggard, so dull and helpless-looking.

"I beg pardon, sir, for coming in so rash—but—please, sir, father's took for death, and askin' for you."

It was marvellous how the man gathered himself together; how, at the call of duty, he shook off the lethargy that had numbed him, the sense of despair that had gathered curdling about his heart.

"Go back to him," he said. "I will follow you in a moment."

And before George reached the door of the lodge, he heard the steady, swinging step they all knew so well, ringing clearly on the slate floor of the long corridor.

THE TITLE OF "REVEREND."

FOR my part, being untitled, I esteem the titled in no measure above the untitled. It is all one whether the man be a Right Honourable, a Duke, a General, a Deputy-Assistant Chamberlain, the High-Born Shirt-Bearer of a Crown Prince, a Reverend Doctor of Divinity, or a plain John Jones. To be sure, like the rest of the world, on occasion, I tender to each and all of these dignitaries, the meed of superficial respect that their prefix claims for them. But this phantasm of respect is confined to their titles.

Of course, if the title be won by an exercise of notable abilities, I am not unwilling to bow civilly to the respective intellects which deserve praise. Upon these, indeed, the titles may be said to be hung, like a ribbon round a fair neck. But the head is no credible augur of the heart. Rather, I am prone to agree with Jean Paul that "the warmest hearts frequently have only a grain of brain or understand-

ing." The heart is the only thing really respectable in a man. But the heart does its work in secret. Only the work of the brain—evidence of which all eyes may see—is rewarded with titles. The odd inference is, therefore, that men with titles should actually be esteemed less than other men.

Of all current titles, none is so common and none so responsible as that of "Reverend." It is a title otherwise than that of Doctor, which medical men prefix to their names. The latter may be termed distinctive merely; however honourable in fact. But the person who receives the title of "Reverend" is suddenly translated from the lay order of men. He is, henceforth, on a plane apart from us. We, sunk in a stupor of worldliness, see him step upwards, as it were, into a sphere of which we may know little or nothing. Henceforth he is less to us than he was, however much he may persist in declaring that life and its pleasures are as dear to him as ever they were. With one hand he touches the angels. It seems to us, of the undignified lalty, incongruous that with the other hand he should continue to touch gross beings of clay like ourselves, and continue to grasp at delights which appear to belong to us as exclusively as the more ethereal pleasures appertain to him.

Do men who take orders look at the matter thus? Not wholly, it is probable. At the outset they commonly feel a little abashed at the thought of their presumption, and, withal, somewhat puffed up with a sense of their own importance, when they realise where they stand in relation to other men. Thus their pride counterpoises their shame; and so they soon acquire new equanimity. Both the pride and the shame are natural enough, and both, of course, speedily disappear. It is a wrench to some men to find that they have ascended into a zone of life away from the majority of their fellows. But they ought not to regret it.

For the most part, shall we say, they accept the higher pleasures of their spiritual life, and the joys beyond price which reward those who devote their lives to others.

The trimmers between two worlds, who, while assuring themselves of a blissful eternity, go to the theatres, hunt, shoot, travel, dance, make love, and who, in short, also pluck every flower in this world's meadows, are not so numerous as of yore; but they still exist.

On the other hand, there is certainly

something to be said in favour of the standpoint of the modern parson, who assumes to personate the muscular Christian of romance, and the Jesuit to whom all the mazy ways of the world are open: both in one individual. Such a clergyman may well, ere he attain his spiritual majority, be able to play various parts in the drama of life. He may plead that it is advisable to have this faculty, that, unless he can drink with the wine-bibber, make a creditable fourth at whist, put his horse at a five-barred gate to the music of a Tally ho! in company with squires and their daughters, row against a lifeboat man, argue with equal ease in bar-rooms, Exeter Halls, and the hives of unbelievers, and parley with thieves in their own exclusive lingo, unless, in brief, he can be all things to all men, he fails to be the power for good that he believes he can be.

This is excellent, theoretically. The anxious priest of this type may readily, and in a most plausible manner, persuade himself that, by living the life of a man of the world, he is mortifying his spiritual affections. It is nothing in opposition if he find the theatre most attractive, the gaiety of the paddock at Epsom contagious, and the whisky he drinks in luxurious smoking-rooms a subtle sapper of his virtuous intentions. It is all experience; and, as such, it will all be turned to account—some day.

Really, we cannot do better than look to the past, if we want an informing sidelight upon our conduct in the present. We must never forget that ours is a "revolving" world, that our dilemmas are dilemmas which have occurred before, and, in fact, do but recur with us; and that certain effects follow certain actions. The Jesuits ought to be a finger-post of warning for our day; though one knows that it is quite the fashion with some people to exhaust their powers of eulogy upon the organisation which began with Loyola. If only the census could give us in tabular form a record of the many persons who began manhood with the serious title of "Reverend," with an adequate sense of the responsibility that attended the title, but with a lurking love for the earthly side of life such as marred their ideals, and made them sophistical with their souls—a record, I say, of the clergy who thus "started fair," but by-and-by went astray down this fatal channel or that, or struck on this or that rock of iniquity which

they had hoped to blast from the spacious sea of worldliness, the census would then be of increased utility, and cruelly romantic.

It was a singular little autobiography that Sydney Smith sent to a magazine, when he was requested by the editor to give a few particulars about himself. Like some hundreds of other young men who, year by year, pass under the Bishop's hands, he had been ordained a Christian minister; he had served as such for fifty years; and in the eighth decade of his life the following are what he thought the salient and more noteworthy features of his character.

"I am living," he says, "among the best society in the metropolis, and at ease in my circumstances; in tolerable health, a mild Whig, a tolerating churchman, and much given to talking, laughing, and noise. I dine with the rich in London, and physic the poor in the country; passing from the saucers of Dives to the sores of Lazarus. I am, upon the whole, a happy man; have found the world an entertaining world, and am thankful to Providence for the part allotted to me in it."

Supposing a daily press had been established two thousand years ago (in truth a terrible fancy!), and Saint Peter had been interviewed, or requisitioned in like manner, towards the end of his ministry, and of course long before his canonisation, how would he have expressed his autobiography?

As briefly as Sydney Smith, may be; but surely in different fashion. Peter, the fisherman, and the Reverend Sydney Smith, or the "Reverend" anybody would not, I fear, have very much in common with each other. You see, in the young days of Christianity, the title of "Reverend" was not. Only when the Church grew to a hierarchy, with ambitions of its own, no way dissimilar in kind from the ambitions of men of the world; only then were titles instituted, with their long tails of delightful-some significance.

Is the notion that has often come to me, that our clergy might become more truly reverend were they shorn of their conventional title of "Reverend," so very heterodox and uncivil? In the present state of affairs, we are more apt to revere—in no very exclusive sense of the word—what is venerated rather than what is genuinely venerable. But if each divine were forced to show himself worthy of veneration before he were venerated, we should have fewer of those parsons among us who may be said to give the enemies

of the Church cause to blaspheme. Such a disendowment of customary titles is not so unreasonable as it may seem. There are people who say that by disestablishment the Church will become newly energised. Surely with as much reason we may affirm that if individuals are put upon their mettle, and made to work for what their predecessors have received by mere inheritance, it will be better for them.

Only the other day, I heard a young Dissenting Minister, who had gone through the usual ministerial course which qualified him to ascend a pulpit, repudiate the title of "Reverend." "I do wish people would not write letters addressing me as 'Reverend.' I prefer to be plain Mr.," he said. Heaven only knows what his motive was in this remark. But it is probable that it was something otherwise than that he might be spared the trial of the clerical cut of clothes which some of our established parsons bewail rather bitterly.

The same man protested equally against the trick of lifting the hat to him in the street. He said he never felt more ashamed of himself, or more conscious of his own demerits, than when a man or a boy uncovered his head to him as a mark of respect. Perhaps he had in his mind at the time Whitfield's boy, "who was so vividly conscious of the presence of God, that he would generally walk the roads with his hat off." What did this spiritual-minded boy do, I wonder, when, in the heat of his reverent fervour, he met a minister of the Church, whether established or independent? He could not take off his scalp, to show further respect. But he could show that there are degrees of respect, as of other things; and, therefore, I dare say he would put his hat on his head, and only uncover again when the minister was hid by the hedge at the corner.

Unless I am mistaken, during the tumult of the Commonwealth era, there were often men who declined the prefix "Reverend," although they fulfilled all the regular duties of the clergy. But it could have been through no laudable promptings of humility that these eccentric shepherds of Christianity discarded the simple title for some such voluminous text of a Christian name, as "Break-their-bones-in-sunder," or "Feed-my-sheep." If one had to choose between the Reverend Peter Robinson, and Mr. Feed-my-sheep Simpkins, I think the preference would lie with the Reverend Peter Robinson.

We have considered the title of "Reverend" in the abstract. Briefly, something may now be said about the public and private life of those to whom this title assumes to give spiritual superiority over the rest of us.

I suppose the public life of the clergyman may well enough be epitomised by his words and demeanour in the pulpit. His sermons are his teaching, and his manner of delivery gives or does not give the stamp of sincerity to what he teaches.

Now, does the title of "Reverend" in any degree act as an afflatus upon the man who finds himself set a few yards or feet—according to the position of the pulpit—above the heads of his hungry congregation? If he accepts his exceeding responsibility as such, and never ceases to strive to realise that he must be reverend, then he justifies his title. But if he receives the title, at the outset of his clerical career, as a sufficing diploma, which will, so to speak, frank him through all his troubles, and be his certificate of character rather than the foundation-stone upon which he is to erect a character, then I fear he will be venerable neither in the pulpit nor out of it, and, therefore, more contemptible in the pulpit than anywhere else.

Nor will his sermons bring reverence even to a good man, with a serious sense of his title, if he does not take some thought of the manner of their delivery. "Preachers sent from God," says Spurgeon, whom we all know as no mean preacher, "are not musical-boxes, which, being once wound up, will play through their set tunes." There is very little of the inspired in sermons that begin with a "Firstly," after a due solid exordium, and end with a "Tenthly," and "In conclusion," followed by a precise peroration. As little acceptable is the thunderstorm of speech which keeps a congregation on a quiver until the sermon is over, when the deafened and nervous worshippers step homewards, delving in vain in their memories for a single treasure of thought or counsel as the residue of the riot. One is disposed to revere Dry-as-dust no more than the mere tempest-rouser.

Again, there is much in attitude that appeals to us of the world. The parson who stands much at his ease, with one hand on the red velvet cushion, and never takes his eyes off his "copy" or the particular corbel in the roof to which he is accustomed to preach, is as likely to gain

the sympathy and the veneration of the paper or the corbel as of his auditors. The latter, in such a case, have a fine justification for slumber, and some of them are sure early to perceive it.

Gesture is much also, as we learn from the theatre. Some object to gesture in the pulpit. The stage is the stage, and the pulpit is the pulpit, they say. But in the name of truth and sense, if gesture be permissible in a play, which has in view nothing more than an artistic entertainment of a number of pleasure-seekers, surely anything that gives emphasis to words designed to do the utmost for human beings that man can do, is not only permissible but desirable! I trow more souls have been made uneasy by pulpit action than by pulpit rhetoric. South and Stillingfleet were erudite preachers, skilled in the concatenation of sentences; but I warrant John Knox could do more in a minute of bodily movement than they in twenty sermons of the most elegant prose, each of the periods of which dovetailed perfectly into the headpiece of its successor.

Certainly, there is gesture and gesture. Neither a monkey nor an automaton would be very convincing in a pulpit. Sincerity must attend upon due energy, and then all things are possible—even the awakening of that spirit of reverence which Mr. Ruskin believes to be an innate and ineradicable part of our nature. The preacher must not

. . . coolly spout, and spout, and spout away,
In one weak, washy, everlasting flood,

with pump-like movement of the arm. Nor must he be as methodical as the Court preacher of the seventeenth century, of whom Ludovicus Cresollius writes: "When he turned himself to the left he spoke a few words, accompanied by a moderate gesture of the hand, then bending to the right he acted the same part over again; then back again to the left, and presently again to the right; almost at an equal and measured interval of time he worked himself up to his usual gesture, and went through his one kind of movement. You could compare him only to the blindfolded Babylonian oxen going forward, and turning back by the same path. I was so disgusted that I shut my eyes; but even so I could not get over the disagreeable impression of the speaker's manner."

Precisely. And, in the like predicament, when the eyes of sense are shut, there is no knowing how long the eyes of the

understanding may keep awake. And then the preacher may whistle for any tribute of veneration other than that which is due to the most ordinary of soporifics.

And, lastly, as touching the "Reverend" in the privacy of home life. Why is it that the parson is so often infelicitous within his parsonage, though revered like a being of a nobler sphere outside his own premises?

Ah! that is a question which demands a more expansive answer than this paper can admit. The priest is of heaven—or he ought to be; but the Vicar or Rector, who is the husband of a wife, and, consequently, the father of a family, is tied very fast to earth.

In truth, I am inclined to see in the wives of the clergy the bar to much feeling of reverence that the more kindly members of the outer world would not be averse, otherwise, to offer to the clergy. I do not say this in enmity to parsons' wives. Quite otherwise. They seem to me to be in as false a position as their husbands. They have married so many types of excellence; viewed them more nearly than any earthly excellence will bear to be viewed; modified their veneration to cold esteem; and, alas, in hundreds of instances, eventually put aside even their esteem, and hung chains of servitude upon their illusive ideals—their husbands.

In theory, of course, a parson's wife is a lively exemplar of all, or as many as possible, of the Christian virtues which it is her husband's privilege to inculcate. Of these virtues, I suppose humility, submission to marital authority, and the like, are the least important, inasmuch as the breach of no one of them is a cardinal sin. Therefore one looks to find all the visible marks of a humble, submissive, and obedient spirit in the wives of the men who are exalted above us as the teacher above his pupil. It is, in fact, not so. As a bride, she may have proposed to be humble, submissive, and obedient to her husband. But then she had a higher conception of her bridegroom's nature than actual experience has confirmed. Thus her attitude has modified because of her experience.

In their early days and years of matrimony (until, indeed, the final satisfying vicarage is attained), the wife is long-suffering and tender. She sighs over the gradual vanishment of the ideal husband whom, perchance, she wedded. Her later

tyranny is then but incubating. It is when the time of the sere and yellow leaf appears, and further translation is improbable, that this develops into monstrosity. By this, the tender chain of attachment has tightened. With reckless unwisdom, the husband has become dependent upon his spouse for all his temporal comforts; and he has far too many temporal comforts for his character's sake. She, perceiving this, exacts atonement. His domestic state becomes worse with the passage of time. To him no varying moods of temper are permitted, whether the wind be easterly, or he be plagued by unspiritual "podagra." If it hap that he omit the "My dear" which his wife demands as the perennial preamble of his every utterance, he suffers for the omission. If he go to town, be his business ever so exclusive, she accompanies him, or ties a parcel to each of the ten fingers of his hands, with explicit instructions for their delivery at as many different houses. His old-time friends have long faded into the world of shadows, unless they had gained the goodwill of his wife at an early date. Without her sanction, he dare as soon invite a dragon into the parsonage as a strange preacher, or into his pulpit either. His children, like his house, are less his than hers; for she it is who rules them, as she rules him, with dictatorial spirit, and he is at home nowhere except in the dulness of his study; whereas she roams imposingly at will in parsonage and parish.

This is no fancy picture, though, confessedly, a melancholy one. Is such a man likely to be reverend, save in name?

Absolute self-renunciation, and nothing less, can alone, it seems, produce the ideal "Reverend."

SOME ODD REMEDIES.

Whome have ye knowen dye honestly
Without helpe of the potycary?
Old Drama of "The Four Ps."

To one acquainted with the more rational methods of medical practice adopted in our own day, there is something amusing in the curious recipes upon which our forefathers relied for the alleviation and cure of disease. The old-time leech entered the field against the grisly foe armed with the most singular weapons. As he was without any very satisfactory data upon which a scientific system of treatment might be founded, he seems to have followed a some-

what erratic course, acting very frequently at the suggestion of fancy or superstition, and ransacking the Kingdoms of Nature in search of the most unpromising, and often offensive materials for his remedies. In this very unequal contest, we can almost imagine we hear Death laughing until his fleshless chaps creak again at the ridiculous and puny efforts of his adversaries, or chuckling in his sleeve—if the old scarecrow wore anything so respectable as a coat—over the feebleness of the blows. When we read of the vagaries of regular practitioners even, we cannot help sympathising with the old writer who speaks of doctors as "the purveyors of the grave." But what shall we say of the absurdities of quacks and herbalists, before whom the most daring modern Doctor Hellebore must hide his diminished head? Their sublime impudence is only surpassed by the credulity of the dupes who believed in their ridiculous nostrums. Astonishment, horror—the words are much too mild to express the sentiments with which we regard the number, and, still more, the nature of the pills and powders, elixirs and magic waters, which they foisted on an innocent public. To a candid mind, the prosperity of these charlatans must suggest a doubt as to the reputed longevity of our ancestors, and might even cast a suspicion on their intelligence, were it not for convincing proofs that the public of to-day is but little less gullible than it was in times before the schoolmaster came abroad. It seems to be in the nature of things that the quack must flourish and the dupe suffer; nor is the present age an exception. Indeed, the proud boast of having legalised quackery remains with us, since we permit the people to poison themselves slowly with "patent medicines," and protect the poisoners with all the machinery of the law.

Many of the old formulæ are too gross and disgusting to be reproduced here; but perhaps an account of some of the more innocent may prove interesting to the reader. I can scarcely recommend him, however, to make a personal trial of their efficacy.

"Time was when the brains were out, the man would die," says Macbeth; but that would not prevent his victorious enemy from making a base use of the relics of the fallen foe. Of old, the Northern warrior drank wassail from a skull; and even to-day the African savage

blows defiance to the living through war-trumpets fashioned out of the thigh-bones of the dead. But it was left to the ingenuity of mediæval physicians to discover a further use for the relics of humanity. According to them, the powdered flesh of a mummy was of sovereign power in physic, especially in contusions, where it prevented the blood from settling and coagulating at the injured part. A little of the moss growing on a skull, dried well, reduced to powder, and used as snuff, was specific for headache; while any one suffering the agonies of toothache was instantly relieved by merely smelling a dead man's tooth. Not only were the portions of a corpse remedial, but we find that headache could be cured by binding round the temples the halter with which a man had been hanged; and the chips of a gibbet, worn in a small bag suspended round the neck, were a certain protection against an attack of ague.

No doubt, ague was much more prevalent in the old days, when so many thousand acres of what is now good arable land were lying in waste marshes, reeking with malarial vapour. But the sufferer was not without choice of other remedies which, if their efficacy was at all in proportion to their simplicity, left little to be desired. If he was unable to obtain the chips of a gibbet, or objected to them on superstitious grounds, many other courses were open to him. Thus, he is directed to have a cake baked of salted bran; while the fit is on, he is to break up the cake and give the pieces to a dog. The disease will then leave him and stick to poor Tray. Another authority recommends him to seal up a spider in a goose-quill, and hang the quill round his neck, allowing it to reach as low as the pit of the stomach.

Aspen leaves, too, were good against ague. And this reminds me of one curious principle which appears to have influenced the leech strongly in his choice of remedies—the so-called "Doctrine of Signatures." To the old physician all plants seemed to possess such curative powers as would render him valuable assistance, if he only knew the ailments in which a particular plant, or part of a plant, might be prescribed with propriety. His peculiar method of reading between the lines in the book of nature soon enabled him to surmount this difficulty to his own satisfaction, if not to the advantage of the patient. The shape of a leaf or flower, its colour, and a hundred other trifles were gladly accepted as indications of the

medicinal virtues upon which he could most confidently rely. Thus, nettle-tea was sure to prove helpful in a case of nettle-rash; the heart-shaped leaves of the ordinary wood-sorrel were remedial in cardiac disease; and turmeric, on account of its deep yellow colour, was of great reputation in the treatment of jaundice. Is it any wonder, then, that the quivering leaves of the aspen were esteemed as a cure for ague?

For epilepsy a charm is sufficient. The physician is directed to whisper into the patient's ear the mystic words: "Gaspar fort myrrhum, thus Melchoir, Balthasar aurum." For toothache, too, there is a charm thus quaintly described by an old writer: "The charmer taketh a pece of whyt Bredde and sayth over that Bredde the Pater Noster, and maketh a Crosse upon the Bredde; then doth he lay that pece of Bredde unto the toth that aketh or unto any sore, tournynge the Crosse unto the sore or dysease and so is he healed." But if we can by such simple means relieve the pangs of the adult sufferer from what Burns has forcibly called "the hell o' a' diseases," some of the teething troubles of the helpless infant are no less easily dealt with. We have only to cut the stem of the Deadly Nightshade into small segments, thread them like beads, and hang this curious necklace round the baby's neck.

How many good mothers are grieved to see the hands of their darlings disfigured by unsightly masses of warts. Let them try the following. It can do no harm; but I certainly cannot promise that it will do any good. "Put three droppes of the blood of a wart into an eldern leaf, and burie it in the earthe and the warts will vanish away." Sir Thomas Browne mentions a cure that is still more simple: "For warts we rub our hands before the moon." From Beaumont and Fletcher's fine comedy, "The Knight of the Burning Pestle," we learn that chilblains should be rubbed well with a mouse-skin, or the sufferer should roll his feet and ancles in hot embers. As for whooping-cough, another bugbear of anxious mothers, it is the merest trifle, and can be cured by any one who rides on a piebald horse. Snails boiled in barley water are sovereign for an ordinary cough, a prescription that would, doubtless, be more acceptable to our Gallic neighbours than ourselves. Still, if it would help to allay the epidemic that seems to prevail in our churches and concert halls, we should certainly try to overcome our squeamish repugnance. Should it prove successful,

how many, who are disturbed in their enjoyment of the music or diverted from their devotions, would combine in extolling the virtues of the humble snail.

Oh gout, thou scourge of the toes and tempers of thy victims, thou that heapest trials upon the sufferer's friends, how many would hail with unaffected joy the remedy that should banish thee for ever! Let them listen to Gerard, and bless the old herbalist with a fervent blessing. "The flowers of the lily-of-the-valley being closely stopped up in a glass, put into an ant-hill and taken away again a month after, ye shall find a liquor in the glass, which, being outwardly applied, helpeth gout." If Gerard counsels well, then adieu to the sharp agonies, the chalky joint, the embargo laid upon the rich *bonnebouche* or favourite port; last, but not least, adieu to that irritability so wearing to the patient, so trying to the miserable attendants. Question not the virtues of a simple plant, cavil not at the "mummery" of hiding it in an ant-hill; but believe and be cured—if you can.

Among the many vagaries of the healing art none is more curious than the celebrated weapon-salve of Paracelsus. Composed of such ingredients as human suet, blood, and other things too unpleasant to be mentioned here, this preparation possessed marvellous, we might almost say, miraculous powers. Beside it the various balsams, ointments, and antiseptic lotions of the present day sink into insignificance. Our most skilful surgeons must apply their medicaments to the wound itself. Paracelsus was under no such necessity; he did not even require to see the patient. Suppose two gentlemen have a slight disagreement that affects, or seems to affect, that very delicate thing, their honour. They meet, fight, and one whips the other neatly through the lungs. Must the wounded man die? Not at all. His friends send the rapier of his adversary to the cunning doctor; it is duly anointed with the wonderful salve, and from that moment the wound begins to mend. It was, doubtless, with some such unguent the Lady of Branksome rubbed the lance that had wounded stout William of Deloraine nigh unto death.

She drew the splinter from the wound,
And with a charm she staunch'd the blood;
She bade the gash be cleansed and bound.
No longer by his side she stood,
But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And washed it from the clotted gore,
And salv'd the splinter o'er and o'er.

William of Deloraine in trance,
 Whene'er she turned it round and round,
 Twisted as if she galled the wound.
 Then to her maidens she did say,
 That he should be whole man and sound,
 Within the course of a night and day.

Many other curious remedies deserve notice; but space, and the reader's patience, are alike limited, and I forbear. The same characteristics of ignorance, folly, and superstition are stamped upon them all. We cannot wonder that the doctor became the butt for quip and savage sarcasm; we cannot help a feeling of the deepest commiseration for the "worthless bodies" on which his singular experiments were made. A man, driven to seek the aid of physic, has always strong claims on our sympathy; but how much more must we pity those who, in the twilight times of medical science, were left to the untender mercies of the high priest of ignorance and imposture.

THROUGH THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

By the time these lines appear, the great show in Paris will have opened its hundred, or, anyhow, its half hundred gates, to the world in general; still unfinished, indeed, for such vast undertakings, in the nature of things, are never really completed in the time originally fixed; but still with so much to be seen that is strange, and new, and interesting, that the earliest visitors are not likely to have gone away disappointed. For us Britons, our national pride may be gratified by seeing our own section fairly completed and up to time, and with other nations, if a good deal is wanting to complete the picture; anyhow, the work is well blocked out, and the chief elements of the composition fairly indicated.

Nothing so immense as this has yet been seen in the way of Exhibitions; and the elaborate, and often beautiful buildings which have been built to receive the products of the whole world, far outstrip in elaboration of design and ornament any previous efforts of the kind. It may be doubted whether such another Universal Exhibition will be ever seen. Great Britain seems to have retired from the competition. Having inaugurated the series in 1851, in an altogether novel and striking way, she has become rather disenchanted of such gatherings. The leaders of our great industries have shown themselves sceptical of the advantages to be

gained by exhibiting their processes for the rest of the world to copy. And to invite other nations to exhibit their wares, and obtain customers among us, while our guests exclude by every means in their power, in the way of customs' barriers and hostile tariffs, all our leading products, savours slightly of a Quixotism that it is not in our nature to practise.

And yet, if it were proposed to have once more a world's fair in London, our national pride would be involved in "trumping the trick" of our friendly adversary on the other side of the table. To cover the Green Park with buildings that should make Buckingham Palace look like a mere suburban villa; to bridge over Piccadilly, and spread ourselves on Hyde Park with kiosks and pavilions all round the Serpentine, and cafés and restaurants along the length of the Ladies' Mile—only with some such effort as this could we hope to rival that glittering assemblage of domes, and pinnacles, and towers, which now rises like a bright vision upon the banks of the Seine.

Such an effort we are not likely to make; and, failing Great Britain, what other nation can be expected to enter into the competition? We may have future Exhibitions styled International, but when again shall we see a general concourse from all the ends of the earth—an affair that arouses interest at Pekin as well as at St. Petersburg, at Cairo as much as at Carlisle?

No; with the Paris Exhibition we may declare that the series comes to an end, as far as the nineteenth century is concerned. In the natural course of things, France would not assume the cost and trouble of another till the year 1900. And, although that year of grace may be technically reckoned as belonging to the nineteenth century, yet people, in parting with the old familiar one thousand eight hundred, will have practically taken leave of it. And then, in the meanwhile, what may not have happened to turn people's thoughts from the notion of a fresh Exhibition under the title "Universal"?

In the meantime, while people are studying ways and means for a forthcoming visit to Paris, and are wondering what there will be to see at the much-talked about Exhibition when they get there, the result of a coup d'œil of the whole circuit of the Exhibition, taken during the last throes of preparation for its opening scene, may prove of some little interest.

Assuredly it is only in Paris that we can expect to meet with such an assemblage of bright and pleasing buildings; such taste expended on temporary structures; so much solidity expressed in wood and plaster; so much florid grace expended on every detail.

It is morning, and bright sunshine brings out all the gilding and glitter of the fairy palace, its bright domes and sparkling points of colour. But the morning is so far advanced that everybody is performing the solemn rites of *déjeuner*. The covered corridors of the great quadrangle resound with the clatter of plates and dishes; they shine with white napery, with glass, with wine bottles of all shapes and sizes. The nimble garçon threads his way about the crowded tables with piles of dishes. Whether we are commissioners, delegates, jurors in embryo, exhibitors, or what not, we are all breakfasting handsomely, talking, eating, drinking, gesticulating in full "entraînement."

Before us the gardens are springing into existence out of ground but yesterday trampled with thousands of footprints and cut up by the wheels of innumerable carts and waggons; grassy slopes replace rude banks of earth, and roses and creepers trail over walls to which the last touches of colour are being applied by white-bloused workmen.

The Eiffel Tower begins to shine like the rest—bronzed here and gilded there, and hung with flags and streamers. Pinnacles and oriental totes, bulbous domes with glittering roofs, Persian minarets, Aztec temples, all are putting on their brightest aspect. The whole scene appears to open out like a flower; some tropical flowers of the gayest hues, about which hover a multitude of bright-winged insects.

If we cross the bridge and survey the banks of the river, there is the same scene of advanced preparation. The sparkling Seine itself is hemmed in with erections of all kinds. It is a show for the people who crowd the decks of the little steam-boats; the navigators of the great barges loaded with firewood or building stones, or, piled high with empty wine-casks, have their share in the show, and gaze in wonder at the city of pavilions and restaurants that has sprung up on the river-shore since their last voyage. All up the slopes of the Trocadéro, too, there are so many new constructions that the fountains have hardly room to play, or the waters to flow; but all looks gay and bright, ex-

cept, perhaps, the Trocadéro Palace itself. That, people turn their backs upon, as quite an ancient monument. But eleven years ago and it was the centre of attraction, and people wondered at and talked about it; but now it is of no more account than an old shoe to the crowd of to-day eager for the latest novelty.

Perhaps it is the gay and festal aspect of the scene that gives the most vivid impression. All those cafés, brasseries, restaurants, Dutch cabarets, Swiss restaurateurs, American bars, which seem to claim the first attention as they occupy the most conspicuous position in the show—all this may seem a little overdone to people who come here with a serious purpose. But to the general this section of the boulevards turned loose into the Champ de Mars will have its attractions; and, after all, the fringe of gaiety is soon passed, and you may be as serious as you please in the endless vistas of galleries which open out before you.

As a whole the Exhibition is arranged with great skill, and with a methodic classification that is characteristic of the clear and logical, if somewhat bureaucratic, mind of the organising Frenchman. Everything here ranges itself under nine different groups; and a general index to the whole Exhibition may be made on the fingers of both hands. At the head of the bill come the Fine Arts—which have a group and a palace all to themselves—the extreme right wing of the chief building, a palace with its own subsidiary dome, and a principal entrance there beneath. As to the art treasures which will be there revealed, it is too early to speak with certainty; but there will be found contributions from all nations which have any independent school of art. All the pictures will be modern, for no work executed before 1878 will be admissible; indeed, no work that appeared in the Burlington House Exhibition, the Paris Salon, or the Paris Exhibition of that year would be eligible. But our living English artists will be well represented; and also German art will find a place; for, happily, art is a stranger to the misunderstandings of rival governments. And we may hope to see the renaissance art of Italy worthily represented.

Well, opposite to the Fine Arts a similar structure, with dome and entrance corresponding, is devoted to the Liberal Arts, which form the second group in the official classification. And the Liberal Arts have a scope that is tolerably extensive. The

art of teaching is justly reckoned one among the chief, so that all the apparatus of education comes in. And with the scholastic equipage comes that of the librarian, and of those who print and make books. All the implements of drawing and modelling are here to be found. Photography, too, naturally takes its place among the liberal arts; and all kinds of scientific instruments are here to be found. Medicine and surgery might well demand a place for themselves in a group apart; only as these sciences have not much to show, fitted for a general exhibition, they may be content with a place here. Music and the drama take the lead in another division of the same wide group, and musical instruments are massed together in the transept, where a grand competitive march of pianos will no doubt soon be heard. And with the drama we have costume and scenery—although whether the scene-painter's is a liberal or fine art is a question that might be argued upon. In this particular group all the principal nations who exhibit are represented side by side with the native product. But we have also another branch—something didactic for the professors themselves—a kind of retrospective view of the history of labour, commencing with the hammering out of flint knives and weapons, and ending with the latest development of motive power. And with this there is a kind of general view of the progress of mankind, touching both on archæology and anthropology.

All this may seem somewhat dry in the reading, as catalogues are apt to be, but the building itself is so warm in its decoration, and arranged with such an eye to effect, that it really proves one of the most attractive points of the Exhibition; and the galleries, estrades, and staircases are arranged with so much skill, that they form a study in themselves. There is a rond-point under the dome of this section which is really one of the features of the Exhibition.

Fortunately, it is not necessary to dwell at length upon the groups three, four, and five which follow, simply because there is so much of them, that nothing less than a technical volume would be necessary to do them justice; and the mere headings of the groups of Furniture, Textiles, Mining, gives no idea of the cloud of etceteras that are comprised in each group. Only it should be borne in mind that it is only in these three groups that each competing

nation exhibits separately, "on its own hook." Also that France occupies a solid block to itself in the centre, and that the rest of the world arranges itself after its own fashion on either side, Great Britain having a very favourable position next to the Fine Arts Palace.

But the next group, that of Machinery, gives us a sensation. For here is the Hall of Machinery, stretching along behind the great central dome, the outline of which breaks what would otherwise appear as a monstrous length of roof-ridge. The structure is as plain as can be; decorators and gilders have left it alone. Except for simple colouring along the lines of construction, it has no adornment to boast of; and yet it is impressive, almost sublime in the vastness of its space, and the multitude of its contents. It is the hall of giants, of the giant force of modern civilisation, giants, sombre, strong, and fierce, ever ready to rend the feeble beings who hold them captive, and who are yet but themselves the vassals and humble servitors of the powers they have enslaved. That is how it strikes one, anyhow, as one looks down from the lofty gallery in the great hall of machines.

And here again France has headed the trick. For this gigantic nave, supported on twenty iron arches, slightly ogival in outline, covers a space of about eighty-four thousand square yards with its single span—that is to say, it is in round numbers about one hundred and fifty yards wide, by five hundred and sixty yards in length, dimensions that have not hitherto been reached by any single structure of the kind.

And to realise at a glance both the charm of this Exhibition, and the vastness of its component parts, there is no better way than to march through the principal entrance under the great central dome, with all its richness of decoration and colouring, and so straight through the central gallery, adorned with magnificent trophies, and thus through the main avenue into the great Hall of Machinery. After that, you can fill in the details at your leisure.

And now we may leave the "groups" for awhile, and wander among the curious varied structures that occupy the grounds at the end of the Liberal Arts Palace, and round its outside edge, where we are among the pavilions devoted to the various States and Republics of Southern and Central America, the great red hall of Montezuma, the home of the Mexican Republic, and

the Kiosquish Palace of the Empire of Brazil, with the bulbous domes and tropical colouring of a dozen minor States; with our own gorgeous Indian Palace, and, literally, without fatigue, survey mankind from China to Peru, with Morocco, and Japan, and Egypt putting in their claims to notice, with a street in Cairo to take the place of our own old London street. And if there is nothing here quite so picturesque as the Street of Foreign Houses of the Paris Exhibition of 1878, yet we have only to make our way to the terrace along the river front to find a curious and instructive assemblage of dwellings of every age and clime, which has been designed and arranged as a history—"de visu"—of the habitations of man. The prehistoric dwellings are, perhaps, the most interesting: the caves, the grottoes, the dwellings of reeds, or the rude, timber huts, the lake dwellings upon piles—all reproduced, upon slight documentary evidence, possibly, but, nevertheless, with much *vraisemblance*. It is instructive also to note how the more elaborate and solid dwelling of the historic period reproduces, in stone or brick, the features of the primitive dwelling; how the wooden posts are dignified into columns of stone; the rude, thatched roof replaced by tiles of varied form; the beehive covering of reeds, glorified into the glittering eastern dome.

As a contrast to the "street of all ages" is the little railway line that belongs exclusively to the Exhibition, with a terminus right at the back of the big building behind the Hall of Machinery, with a station at the Pont de Jena, and stopping-places at short distances along the route, which leads all down the galleries that border the river to a *dépôt* in the Square des Invalides.

But it would be a mistake to pass without stopping to examine the long galleries devoted to agriculture and horticulture, and all kinds of food products, with the implements and agricultural machinery of many different nations, with a section of grape culture and vintages, and a shady avenue of trees from end to end. These galleries dispose of groups seven, eight, and nine, although flowers and plants, by the way, and sundry other kindred classes, are to be found on the terraces of the Trocadéro. But still, when you arrive at the further end of the long agricultural gallery, you may feel that you have elbowed through the "groups," and have nothing more to do but enjoy yourself.

And it is a strange new world that meets the view on one side of the esplanade of Invalides. It is the land of the white elephant, the land of marble mountains, of palm and rice-wines, of tigers, deer, and peacocks, of gold, perhaps. Anyhow, it is a land that seizes upon the jaded imagination, because we know so little about it; that strange Indo-Chinese peninsula whose rôle in the world's history might have been so great, and yet has hitherto been so small. Burmah, indeed, we know something about, and we are not altogether unacquainted with Siam. But who can claim an intimate acquaintance with Cambodia, with its relics of a powerful dynasty and empire that has passed away, or Laos, with its lovely lakes and picturesque landscapes, its pleasant, lively towns, devoted to gossip and animated movement, among pagodas, bonzes, gardens, to the sound of the tom-tom, the drum, or the melodious gong? And then the rafts on the river, and the floating huts and the hundreds of boats that flit about here and there! Decidedly there are charms about Indo-China that we realise for the first time when we see the bright and quaint little street of gay colours and fantastic architecture that represents Indo-China, or rather that part of it which the French have taken under their protection.

Indeed, we have upon the Square des Invalides a complete Colonial Exhibition, beginning with an Algerian palace and bazaar, with porches, arcades, and minarets; and a grand pavilion of Tunis. Altogether, something like a bit of an Arab town, with shops, and artificers, and all kinds of Eastern nicknacks. But, somehow, the Arab charm has a little faded, and wants the freshness and unexpectedness of Cochin China and Tonquin.

And those Annamites, with their brown smug faces, are decidedly interesting: not Chinese exactly, nor Tartars, nor Malays, but something betwixt and between. And we have a little Annamite theatre, and games and diversions. Yes, they are a people who love to be amused, and there is nothing like that for inspiring a friendly feeling. And we may prophesy that, if anything is to be the rage this year in Paris, it will be that corner of the Exhibition where the tom-tom beats and the gaily-coloured temples and topees of farther India rise among their pleasant surroundings.

And in front of this gay village, "grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled

front," in the form of an elegant Bureau de Guerre, a building of quite a monumental cast, and an example of what can be done in the way of magnificence with plaster and cement. It is crammed with the appliances of war, and is a pleasing comment on the exhibition opposite. These are the benefits we — French, English, Germans, Dutch, everybody—confer upon less civilised peoples when we take them under our protection: obus-shell, shrapnel, canister, grape, with bullets of all kinds and shapes, and death-dealing explosives. It is inevitable, perhaps; but none the less sad on that account. Still, everybody enjoys a good show of death-dealing implements, and there is no doubt that the pavilion of war will attract its crowds of admirers.

There is still much to be seen that we have missed, by the way. But even to make the round of this great gathering from all parts of the earth, is a fatiguing experience, and all the glitter and variety of the scene fairly benumbs, at last, the powers of observation. And so let us pass between the gay pagodas that mark the entrance on this side of the Exhibition grounds, and, finding ourselves in quite a different latitude from where we entered, pass out among the throng that is watching the progress of events with much curiosity from outside.

HUMOUR.

It is very frequently stated that it is extremely difficult to give a satisfactory definition of humour. Now, it is possible that this difficulty may arise from a slight confusion in the minds of those who make the statement. When we attempt to define this word, we almost invariably think of various specimens of the quality drawn from very different sources, and we find that they affect us in so many different ways, that a definition which will include all their wondrous variety is impossible. One man's humour, we say, is characterised by a tender beauty and grace; another's by a savage and vindictive ferocity; the humour of a third may be largely dependent upon the author's personal characteristics. But all these are qualities not of humour, but of the men themselves.

Nor do the expressions, "coarse," "delicate," "refined," really apply to humour; they rather apply to the humourist himself, or to the use he makes

of the materials provided for him. Again, the word "humour," or "humorous," is applied indiscriminately to the object which provokes amusement, or to the faculty by which that object is perceived, when in truth these words belong to neither one nor other, but to the result of the union of the two.

Take as an illustration the case of music. Roughly speaking, music consists, in the first place, of the result of an external harmonious arrangement of sounds falling upon ears qualified to appreciate them. If men were not qualified to appreciate such sounds, their orderly arrangement would not result in music, just as in the case of Mr. Pecksniff, the celebrated architect, to whom, it will be remembered, organ-playing sounded like a melodious snore.

Now, the analogy between humour and music is a singularly perfect one. Music, objectively considered, is at first an harmonious arrangement of sounds; but, later, as the musical faculty becomes developed, it also includes the arrangement of the ideas of sounds in the mind. The humorous faculty has been developed in the same manner. Originally, it would consist, objectively considered, in a rudimentary power to appreciate an unexpected fitness or incongruity observed in certain occurrences, apart from their practical application in daily life, while, later, as this power developed, there would occur spontaneously in the mind association of ideas of unexpected fitness or incongruity, analogous to the creative faculty of music. And just as in the case of Mr. Pecksniff—than whom surely none could have a worse ear for music—there was a rudimentary faculty for the "divine art," since the booming of the organ sounded differently from ordinary snoring, inasmuch as it was melodious; so, probably, no human being is altogether devoid of a rudimentary sense of humour.

Of what retards and modifies the developement of this sense, we shall speak presently. Meanwhile, let the definition of humour stand thus: Humour is the result of an unexpected fitness or incongruity, observed either in the world without, or in the association of ideas within, acting upon a mind qualified to appreciate in a special manner such fitness or incongruity, apart from their practical application in daily life. This may seem rather a "metaphysical" way of putting it; but illustration may make it

clearer. Let us take a few specimens of humour at random, not of the highest or most complex class, but simply the ordinary type that suffices for momentary enjoyment.

There is the well-known story of the clergyman who was preaching in his son's church. The son was addicted to what his father considered foolish excesses in ritual; and when the old gentleman gave out as his text, "Have mercy upon my son . . . a lunatic," the smile which went round the church might be well excused. Here the unexpected fitness of the application was enhanced by the unfitness of the place for jesting.

But humour is sometimes caused by the irrelevance of two remarks, either of which would suit the circumstances well enough.

The following is a fair example. At a Scotch funeral one of the mourners approached the minister and whispered to him:

"Dae ye ken what I aye think just when they're letting down the coffin?" (the coffin was just being lowered into the grave).

"Solemn thoughts, I suppose," said the minister; "of death and eternity, I have no doubt."

"Na," said the other, "I'm aye awfu' glad it's no me."

Here the contrast with the answer of the minister is not without its resultant humour. Again, the will attributed to Rabelais: "I owe much, I have nothing, the rest I give to the poor," owes perhaps more to the tremendous unfitness for such jesting at so solemn a time as death, than to the incongruity existing between the different parts of the sentence.

American humour is characterised by an outrageous bringing together of incongruous ideas. Mark Twain, coming into a neighbour's house, and, after lazily smoking and chatting for a while, remarking suddenly that he had only dropped in to tell them their house was on fire, is a good enough example of this, as is also the picture of the same distinguished author weeping over the grave of Adam, the "noble old man who did not live to see his son."

We may note here that what is to be accounted legitimate humour is regulated in any age by the state of general culture and refinement. Much of the humour that was freely indulged even before Queens and Princesses would now be regarded by most people as coarse and disgusting, rather than humorous; but

this does not arise from the nature or sense of humour having undergone any real change, it simply indicates that in the minds of cultured people of the present day the revolting nature of the subject outweighs its humorous aspect. Many must be conscious in perusing the robust humour of earlier days that a mental contest goes on between their sense of refinement and their sense of humour. Modern education and conditions of social life have gradually strengthened the general sense of refinement, which had but a rudimentary existence in the days of the Tudors.

The development of the sense of humour, like all other developments, is regulated largely by external conditions. A good example of this is to be found in the fact that the Scotchman is not so keenly appreciative of humour as the Englishman or Irishman. Yet how could he be? In days gone by, when Scottish character was forming, the terrific doctrines of the "Confession of Faith," combined with the necessity for the strictest economy and frugality in living, impressed the Scottish mind with the seriousness of life both here and hereafter, and left an almost ineffaceable stamp on the national character. How could a man to whom not only this life was hard and uncertain, but who felt this precarious life to be overshadowed by the more tremendous uncertainty, or rather the appalling certainty of the next, how could such a man be frivolous?

The question as to who was among the number of the elect, was one too far-reaching in its nature to permit mere frivolity to have a permanent place in the national character. Here, also, lies the explanation of that apparent hypocrisy with which Southrons have so freely charged the North in connection with sabbatarianism and asceticism generally. The weakness of human nature could not be so far counteracted by sternness of demeanour and thought as to prevent sin entering the strictest parishes, while certain fixed rules of conduct might yet be observed. The lighter side of human nature was suppressed in a large degree by circumstances; but, as in the case of the ascetic monks of old, human nature could not be suppressed altogether. Yet there is no connection between austerity of mind and laxity of life, any more than there is—although some people would apparently have us think there is—between frivolity and innocence.

It is on account of their gloomy theological system that Scottish humour is so largely clerical in its character. Not that clerical humour is, as a rule, better than lay—very far from that—but that there was in it an undoubted sense of relief. There was, undoubtedly, an unexpressed feeling that things could not be so terribly bad in the next world if the minister, always a dread power in by-gone times, condescended to joke and to share the frivolities, if not the weaknesses of mankind.

Again, many of the stories which seem humorous to us, were full of serious meaning to the actors in them. There is humour to us in the following story, quoted by Professor de Morgan, although none to the utterers of the following dialogue, not from a want of a sense of humour, but from the seriousness of the subject:

"How many of the elect do ye think there will be on the earth at present?" said one Scotchman to another.

"Maybe, a dizen" (dozen), responded the other.

"Hoot, man! no near sae mony as that!" indignantly rejoined his friend.

The same remarks apply to the story of the old lady who was very despondent as to the condition of the world. She was sharply rebuked by a neighbour:

"Janet, woman, ye surely think that naeboddy will be saved except yersel' and the minister!"

"Weel," responded Janet, "I sometime hae my doubts about the minister."

The question was too serious to affect the sense of humour in either party. Nor is there in this last story any of the conceit which might have animated the ancient Jewish rabbi, when he declared that if all the world were lost he and his son would be saved, since, in Scotland, the idea of salvation by personal merit was universally repudiated.

There may be something, too, of this sense of relief which accounts for the rapacious way in which clerical humour is received even in England, where beef has always been plentiful and religion less gloomy than in Scotland. It is true that clerical humour is not "national" to such an extent in England as in Scotland; but yet, the reason for its appreciation is probably the same.

Many people cannot shake off a vague and undefined terror of the future, which is warranted by pulpit addresses; yet,

when the same voice utters the light and frivolous jest, people are reassured. But the whole question is very simple. If there be a terrible future, even for a few—a future so terrible that words cannot paint it—then the clergy, of all people, should not jest; if, on the other hand, there is really nothing to fear, why should they frighten us? Yet many people comfort themselves with clerical wit, like Crozat, who remarked to Massillon:

"Mon père, votre morale m'affraye; mais votre façon de vivre me rassure."

One other circumstance, which may raise the idea that humour is difficult to define, arises from the fact that whatever causes a laugh is apt to be called humour. It is not humour, truly so called, that impels a rude street boy to throw a snowball at your new hat, and laugh uproariously if his "little joke" succeeds. Laughter, in this case, is probably only the expression of the partial gratification of a yet imperfectly-developed, but perfectly natural spirit of exasperation at the sight of one who is better dressed or is occupying a better position than himself; a spirit which, in its later development, may make its possessor a patriot or a politician, but not a humourist. Such conduct can only be said to be humorous in the same sense as that of Mark Twain's celebrated ancestor, who, he tells us, was a "born humourist," and who was in the habit of stabbing people unexpectedly in the dark, "in order to see them jump."

The smile or grin of sarcasm is not born of true humour, but is the outcome of the gratification of seeing pain inflicted, worthy only of fallen angels, and not of kindly human nature. Humour softens and brightens everything it touches: it is for making life happier, not for inflicting pain, that it exists.

Yet its very kindly nature can the hand of genius turn into a vehicle of attack or punishment, as witness Pope's savage assault upon Herve; Dryden's fierce description of Buckingham; or Macaulay's scathing criticism upon Mr. Robert Montgomery's poems, which, without it, would be sheer brutality.

Humour then, in its last analysis, is the same under all circumstances, different specimens of it owing their special characteristics to the humourist himself, just as a "primrose by the river's brim" is a really different thing to different people, or, as Swift glorified even the homely broomstick.

The bitterness, delicacy, tenderness, fecundity of the individual make humour their vehicle; but it is far more suited for kindness than for ill-will. Humour, otherwise commonplace, is sometimes decked out by certain peculiarities of voice or manner of the speaker. This we know to have been largely the case with Charles Lamb, much of his humour being lost in repetition. Yet he, too, has many instances of true humour in his sayings, as for example, when he apologises for Coleridge's magnificent flights of philosophical fancy, by saying that "Coleridge was always so full of his fun;" or when he compared that great thinker to an "archangel a little damaged." No spice of ill-will flavoured these personal remarks; it was a spirit of pure fun which animated him.

Herr Teufelsdröckh is worthy of mention in this connection. That distinguished Professor, it will be remembered, was only known to have laughed once, and then at the idea of a cast metal King. Not a very comical image to ordinary people, perhaps; yet, doubtless, in the mind of Teufelsdröckh, a whole series of unexpected fitnesses and incongruities ranging over the whole field of political and historical science suddenly suggested themselves, and moved him to laughter; "such a peal of laughter," his biographer describes it. Although the Professor is a myth, yet, considering to whom we owe the figure, we may grant that he illustrates the theory that study and reflection on grave and serious topics do not impair the sense of humour, but only prevents it being excited by trifles. No thinking person could ever giggle, if we except Dr. Parr, who is said to have indulged in this peculiarly feminine form of laughter.

Mr. Mallock, in that most delightful book, "The New Republic," makes one of his characters declare that modern humour owes all its point to Christianity. It is because Christianity has made life infinitely serious, that Sterne, for example, sees it full of "infinite jest!" There is, of course, truth in this, as it has previously been endeavoured to be shown; but its bearing is of limited extent. It is the minority to whom life has been made infinitely serious by the teaching of Christianity; but yet Christianity, as we have seen, gives point by contrast to clerical wit, to the remarks of rigid Calvinists, to the hilarious indecency of Rabelais, to the innuendoes of Sterne—both clergymen, by the way—or to the immorality of Wycherley and Dryden. But the issues

of Christianity have little to do with the gentle quips of Lamb, the genial humour of Dickens, or the kindly satire of Thackeray, where we find most clearly the most delicate, purest, noblest appreciation of humour, and which they hand on to us for us to appreciate according as our sense of humour is developed, just as the musician hands on, by means of organ music or choral song, his own perceptions and ideas of the beautiful.

SHILLINGBURY SKETCHES.

A COUNTY MAGNATE.

THE LATIMERS is just as distinctly the big house of the district, of which Shillingbury is the centre, as ever it was; but it by no means looms so large above its surroundings in the life of the place as it did in the days when Sir Thomas Kedgbury held sway there. It is the big house still; but big houses, during the last quarter of a century, have scarcely preserved their relative position of consequence to the rest of the world. They have remained what they ever were, while little houses have been growing bigger, even in my birthplace, where the rate of progress is by no means rapid. Supposing that Sir Francis, the present Baronet, had elected to follow in the steps of his father and fill the offices of Churchwarden, Justice of the Peace, and Chairman of Quarter Sessions, the greetings in the market-place, the deferential silence of the gathering of men addressed by him, and the sentiment of reverence permeating society in general, would never have been accorded to him in the same degree in which they were given to his father.

Baronets count for something still, no doubt; but nowadays county influence is apt to dwindle woefully if it be not carefully nursed and tended. The voices which send a man to the seat of worship are to be counted by hundreds instead of tens; and these voices must be delicately dealt with, or the tone may grow most unpleasant to the ear. Old Sir David would send a dozen hares at Christmas into a particular village, and the support of every man with a vote therein would be his whenever he might ask for it. Sir Thomas, his son, would compass the same end by a morning's visit and hand-shaking, and talk about the next Local Government Bill; but for Sir Francis to have followed suit would have meant a lot of hard work; and hard

work, especially when undertaken for an end for which he did not care two straws, Sir Francis disliked exceedingly. He early determined to let his neighbours alone; and so it came about that men whose fathers had trembled at old Sir David's nod, went about their public duties thinking rather how they should please themselves, than as to how it might strike the owner of The Latimers.

Sir Thomas was all his life a theorist, a man of progressive ideas, who never got any nearer to his ideal. He was always on the look-out for a golden age, for the country in general, and for the Fallowshire farmer in particular. At his Christmas rent audit he always made a speech, in which the speedy advent of the good time was proclaimed; for, in his day, there were bad times in the agricultural world, as there always have been, and, doubtless, ever will be. One year the farmer's profits were to be doubled by an improved system of drill husbandry; another by substituting sunflowers as a crop for swede turnips; and another by growing sugar-beet to compete with West-Indian cane.

Sir Thomas was a theorist in the cultivation of the youthful mind, as well as of his ancestral acres, and as soon as his heir had learnt his alphabet, he elaborated a system of education which should stimulate in Master Frank's brain the growth of ideas, as powerfully as the patent corn-drill should accelerate the germination of wheat and barley in the soil of the home farm. As a man of modern ideas—a revolutionist in a small way—Sir Thomas found the old courses of Eton and Christ Church quite behind the times. He was probably, in a measure, right; but, like all reformers, he found it easier to destroy than to construct; and the substitute he found for the above-named venerable foundations brought forth strange fruit in the end.

In his youth Sir Thomas had spent a good deal of money in the cause of liberty. Greek and Polish patriots made heavy raids on his purse, and the damage he did to his fortune was only just repaired by a judicious marriage with the only daughter of Joshua Dibbs, Esq., of the Hollies, Martlebury, and late of Saint Mary Axe, in the City of London. He married late, and he was over fifty when his son and heir was born, so he had good store of experience to guide him in his educational task. Naturally, the young hopeful was to be very much the same sort of man as his father, only

much more highly finished and successful. Everything that the father had aimed at and missed, the son was to aim at and bring down. Sir Thomas was chairman of almost every committee sitting in the county. To all these honours his son must succeed; and he must, in addition, be the member for the division of the county. Somehow or other, though East Fallowshire was a Whig stronghold, and Sir Thomas one of the mildest of Liberals, he had never been able to persuade the electors to return him to Parliament. Once his party tried him as a candidate, and temporarily lost the seat to a fox-hunting young Tory, all because—so the party-agent declared—Sir Thomas talked for more than an hour about the constitution of Athens, comparing it with that of England, to a lot of farmers, who thought and cared about nothing in politics save the repeal of the malt-tax. In spite of his own failure, Sir Thomas never dreamt that any constituency in England would reject a candidate of his own training. If Mr. Francis Kedgbury were once seated in the House, oratory and common sense, the fruit of hereditary and careful training, would soon carry him into an under-secretaryship; and, the first step taken, there remained nothing but a succession of lifts, culminating either at the Foreign Office or the Treasury, with a peerage, Lord Kedgbury, of The Latimers, thrown in by way of decoration.

Sir Thomas's theory of education did not, however, stop at polishing a young man on one side only. Frank must stand out perfect—a four-square man. A correct literary style, and a good training in modern languages, were little less important than a knowledge of public affairs, and, in these days of popular science, a public man should be at home in at least one branch of physical research. From memory of his own school days, he did not fancy that Frank would pick up much in the way of science, if subjected to the same curriculum; though, no doubt, the older schools had been rudely shaken out of their grammatical torpor since he was last birched.

So Frank was sent to a private establishment, conducted on the lines of our great public schools. The master thereof was a D.D. of Oxford, and imbued with "university tone" to his very finger-tips. So Sir Thomas was fain to believe that this special attribute, without which a man can hardly expect to succeed in English public

life, might be picked up at Dr. Dillow's, notwithstanding the fact that there was on the premises a laboratory fitted up with all the most improved machinery for probing the secrets of Nature.

Sir Thomas was right in this conjecture. Frank picked up the requisite amount of tone under Dr. Dillow's care; and, if he was at all like the young gentleman described in the doctor's terminal reports, he must have mastered nearly every department of learning. When he was eighteen, the turn of modern languages came; and he was sent, first, for six months to France, and then for a like time to Germany. He certainly spent this year of his life to some advantage, for he came back with a good knowledge of French and German, and a store of ideas on things in general which he did not at once divulge at The Latimers. He was very anxious to finish his education at Bonn, instead of at Oxford; but Sir Thomas, in spite of his progressive ideas, felt that this would be too complete a disregard of orthodox usage.

Sir Francis was a little disappointed when he came to test his son as to his familiarity with the works of Novalis and Montesquieu; neither did he find much progress in physics or chemistry. So, by way of fanning the lamp of science, he took Frank with him to a meeting of the British Association. Here a farther disappointment awaited him. Frank invariably went to sleep before the chairman of the meeting had concluded his introductory remarks; and, after a day or two, said that he wasn't feeling well, and thought he had better get back to The Latimers and see Dr. Goldingham.

Sir Francis assented with a bad grace; and, when he followed some days later, he found that the young gentleman had recovered rapidly in his native air, and had been shooting rabbits ever since his return.

Then came Frank's career at Oxford; but this was brief and not particularly glorious. There was a mystery hanging over it which not even the social detectives of Shillingbury were able to fathom; but the most commonly accepted view was that its untimely interruption had something to do with a young lady, the daughter of a lodging-house keeper. Others, more friendly, declared that the air of Oxford was too damp for the delicate chest which Frank had inherited from his mother. Anyhow, after two terms, that young gentleman's name ceased to figure on the

college books, and he returned to The Latimers to complete his training for public life under Sir Thomas's particular care.

For the remainder of his life the worthy Baronet had to take to heart the teaching of the maxim that any one can lead a horse to the water, but that no one can make him drink if he be not so disposed. He had begun his heir-training with the fundamental mistake of estimating Frank as a swan of the finest plumage, whereas the boy was a goose, and nothing more—a well-grown, amiable young goose, no doubt; but a goose all the same. In settling the question with himself that Frank was to rise to the top of the tree, he probably reckoned quite as much on the excellence of his own system of training as on the quality of the material he would have to deal with. Still, in any case, he must have valued the qualifications of his son and heir ridiculously higher than the rest of the world did. Frank was a good-natured young fellow with average ability and a keen sense of humour, and if he had been educated on the ordinary lines of youths of his quality, he would probably have made just as good a figure in the world as his father. Sir Thomas, unfortunately, wanted him to be ever so much better; and to compass this end he dosed the boy with science and political economy till he positively came to loathe every subject which his father regarded as necessary for the formation of a public man. The grocer's boy, after a surfeit of currants and sweet stuff, is fabled never to touch sugar again; so it was not extraordinary that Francis Kedgbury, after being crammed with his father's nostrums for promoting the growth of statesmanship, should resolve to have done with them for good and all as soon as he should have come to man's estate.

This epoch he determined should begin when he finally shook the dust of Oxford off his feet. Thereupon arose a struggle, which at one time threatened to become acute between his father and himself, as to the way in which he should spend his time and the subjects which should occupy his thoughts; for Sir Thomas was by no means ready to give over his course of treatment, and thereby confess that his great experiment had turned out a failure. He laid down a course of reading in political science, and proposed to hold an examination of his candidate at the end of three months; but as he found that, at the

end of this time, the text-books had never been cut, there came an open quarrel. Francis went off to London, and began to read for the Bar. The rupture was healed after a few months; and, before a year had elapsed, Sir Thomas died and left his lands and honours to the heir whom he had in vain tried to fashion into a Somers or a Fox.

A young man, who comes into a baronetcy and five thousand a year, unencumbered either by mortgages or brothers and sisters, is generally set down as one of Fortune's favourites. Sir Francis, no doubt, fully realised that Fortune had been very kind to him, and he set himself to enjoy her gifts in earnest. His father had been by no means the traditional English country gentleman, and he, himself, differed quite as much from the normal type, only in a diametrically opposite direction. He was of an easy temperament, very sensible to the influence of his surroundings—supposing those surroundings to be in any way sympathetic.

During his sojourn in France, he had read largely of the fiction of the country, and, not unnaturally, began to take a light and airy view of life. The rigorous apprenticeship in county business, as a prelude to managing the affairs of the State, which his father was always exhibiting to him as his manifest destiny, seemed very tame and dreary when compared with a spell of Bohemianism in Paris, and the experience of a "grande passion" or two. Certain of his French fellow-students, too—French boys of seventeen are much more enterprising than English of the same age—gave him highly picturesque accounts of their exploits with the "beau sexe;" and Frank would have been marvellously different from other boys if he had not been fired with an ambition to investigate for himself these rose-grown paths before settling down to the serious business of his career. About this time he began to evolve terribly pessimistic theories of life, and to express the same in verse.

It was a severe wrench when the time came for him to break with Louis and Achille, and betake himself beyond the Rhine to do battle with the barbarous brain-perplexing intricacies of Teutonic cases and genders. A promise was made on either side that letters should be exchanged, so that each might know how the world was dealing with the other in the way of romantic adventure. This correspondence was kept up for a month or two;

but by degrees it slackened, and, finally, Frank let it drop altogether. He had, indeed, found that the heart-friendships he had set up with Carl and Gustav, at Dusseldorf, were absorbing enough to fill the void in his nature caused by the separation from his friends of last year. Carl and Gustav were both going to the University of Bonn, and Frank, fascinated by the accounts of what Carl's brother and Gustav's cousin had to say about the delights of that seat of learning, wrote home and made that suggestion about going thither which Sir Thomas found necessary to veto. In his discourse with his new friends there was, no doubt, a strain of romance in which Amalia and Löttchen came in for a share of attention; but the bent of the young Teutons' lucubrations was towards more serious matters, such as the Infinite, the inconceivable Realities, with occasional excursions into the lighter regions of World-anguish, and Time-sickness. Frank, who would have yawned his head off at the bare mention of such themes while he was subjected to the Voltairean influence of Louis and Achille, began after a bit to take an interest in searching for the cause of his being, and by the time he had done with Dusseldorf, could spin yarns metaphysic with the best of them, and found himself furnished with a set of ideas on matters social and religious, such as would assuredly not square with those current in the drawing-rooms and pulpits of Fallowshire.

The Oxford episode was the first manifestation of the effect of the new training. The heaven absorbed by Mr. Francis Kedgbury during his continental sojourn, worked in a fashion which quite put him out of sympathy with his environment, and soon led to a catastrophe. The six months' residence at The Latimers which followed, was probably the most miserable time that he and his father and mother ever knew. Sir Thomas felt that his life task had come to naught, and Frank had not the gift of reticence. After he had had the pleasure of being present at half-a-dozen dinner-parties in the neighbourhood, the verdict of the county was that the future master of The Latimers was an atheist, a revolutionist, and a libertine.

Those who know the sweet spirit of charity with which really "good" people beat back assaults on their cherished beliefs, will understand that, in spite of these hard words, Frank Kedgbury need not have been a monster; that he might, on the

contrary, have been a very good fellow. But, good or not, it was evident that he did not suit The Latimers at present; and he had sense enough to see this. He went to London with no intention to work at the law; his intention was rather to explore some byway of literature. I don't know whether he ever found this byway, but he certainly enjoyed himself vastly in the turnpike road out of which it may have branched.

When Sir Thomas died there was an uneasy sensation amongst the inmates of the half-dozen houses in the district which were on visiting terms with The Latimers, and an active curiosity in less exalted circles as to how the young Baronet would bear his honours. They soon had an opportunity of judging, for Sir Francis came down to reside at once. There was a little disappointment in certain quarters when it transpired that the "menage" was to be a bachelor one, for a report had got about Shillingbury that a popular burlesque actress was likely to proclaim herself to the world as Lady Kedgbury. Sir Francis asked a few of the local sportsmen to shoot the woods in the autumn; and, though the gentlemen could see that their host was not at home with them in their own range of topics, they agreed that he wasn't a bad fellow, seeing what a queer bringing up he had had. They were less pleased with some men from London who were staying in the house; men who did not shoot, but came out to luncheon, and during that meal led the conversation away from the slaughter of animals along a track which was very strange ground to the Fallowshire folk; men who came to dinner in velveteen coats smelling strongly of tobacco, and always called their host by his Christian name. Sir Francis, the upper dozen of the neighbourhood decided, might come all right in the end; but it would be well to get rid at once of the men in the velveteen coats.

But these gentlemen, Dick Short, who did the theatrical work for the "Sundial," and Harry Cross, who was on "The Grove," were not blessed with many friends who kept so good a house as Frank Kedgbury, and were consequently in no hurry to be got rid of. Sir Francis spent a good part of the winter in town, and he certainly found a dinner at the old place, and a symposium afterwards in his rooms, a pleasanter way of spending the evening, than sitting alone in his library at The Latimers. Still, it was, somehow,

not so pleasant to be called "Frank" by Dick and Harry, as it was in the old days. Then, again, these worthies had taken upon themselves to impress upon him—in season and out of season—that it would never do for him to settle down into what they were pleased to call the chawbacon line of life.

He dined several times at Lord St. Osyth's—the biggest of all the Fallowshire Peers—and found that all the wit in the world was not monopolised by the gentlemen who write for the daily press; and, before he left town, he accepted an invitation to spend Christmas at Lord St. Osyth's place in West Fallowshire.

Lord St. Osyth was a clever, cultivated man, who had always looked upon Sir Thomas Kedgbury as a shallow pedant, and regretted that a nice boy like Frank should have been spoilt by his father's folly; and he set to work in the most judicious manner to repair the mischief, and win the stray sheep back to the fold.

"My dear Kedgbury," he said, the first night in the smoking-room, "you must find the people horribly dull about here, after your life in town."

"Their tastes are not exactly my tastes, I confess," Frank replied; "but I don't know that I can find fault with them on that score."

"But you must have society about you. You can't always import your friends from London. Nowadays, you see, a man isn't tied to his own bit of country, as he was in my father's time. There must be an inner circle in county society, as there practically is everywhere."

"Yes, I suppose so," said Frank, wondering where the line was to be drawn, and whether he would be placed on the right side of it.

"And, I may tell you," Lord St. Osyth went on, "that it was pleasant hearing to our friends, when the news came that you were going to settle amongst us. There was a report, at one time, that you were going to let your place."

"Oh, I never thought of doing that," said Frank.

"Men like yourself, with keen, intellectual tastes, are disposed sometimes—quite wrongly, as I hold—to fancy that they can only feel the full charm of life in London. Theirs is a selfish view, too. Men must give out as well as absorb; and how can a man in your position make better use of his culture than in helping those less favoured about him to rise to a higher level?"

"There are several very nice new people come into your parts," Lord St. Osyth continued; "Lady Aylward and the Cropredys. Lady Aylward has a daughter who has done great things at Girton, I'm told."

"Indeed," said Frank. "I've met several Girton girls in town."

"And you've liked them, I'll be bound. That's all nonsense about high education hardening a woman. But you'll have a chance of gaining fresh experiences. The Aylwards dine with us to-morrow."

The dinner-party was a small one. Miss Aylward was a bright, clever girl, dressed like one of Titian's ladies, and with no ink-stains on her fingers. She was full of the enthusiasm of letters; and, besides this, was ready to dance all night and skate all day. Sir Francis found it vastly more pleasant to discuss Matthew Arnold's last essay, or the latest revival at the Lyceum, with her, than with Dick Short, with his shabby catchwords and machine-made criticism. And this comparison stood still more clearly in her favour when, on his return to The Latimers, he found Dick established there for a week's holiday, and the house smelling of Cavendish like—well, like Mr. Short's chambers in Clifford's Inn. Frank's manner towards his self-bidden guest was very cool; but this did not tend to hasten Dick's departure, neither did it prevent him from borrowing ten pounds from his host the morning he left. The last night of his visit he treated Frank, anew, to his ideas on the subject of the country as a place of residence; and wound up by declaring that a boy of the mettle of Frank Kedgbury would never get on with a set of jolter-heads, like the people round about.

The next month Sir Francis met Miss Aylward at a county ball, and he also received a letter from Dick Short, asking for a further loan—twenty pounds, this time. Dick, in his letter, again urged his friend to come up to town. They would be able to see plenty of each other, as Harry Cross was going to marry his landlady's daughter, and would be boxed up at home, at least for a time.

The loan was sent, and the letter accompanying it was written—in terms which made Dick wish that he had asked for fifty pounds, while he was about it, for he marked that Sir Francis Kedgbury was going to take to new ways, and that his old friends were to go the way of his old

clothes. And, indeed, from this time, the young Baronet advanced towards his manifest destiny with hurrying steps. He went to church once every Sunday, unless the weather was very bad. He became the president of the Shillingbury Athenæum, and a supporter of all those local societies to which men in his position are expected to act as buttresses.

Naturally, he married Miss Aylward—the wisest step he could possibly have taken—and quietly fell into the position he was born to occupy, as if those trifling aberrations above recorded had never been.

The moral to be drawn from the story of Francis Kedgbury's early life is, that the individual is very rarely able to resist the drift of his surroundings; and that animals, whether they be biped or quadruped, are easier led than driven. There is a tradition that when an Irish drover wants to beguile his grunting consignment on board the steamer, he seizes the curly tail and pulls back the owner thereof with all his might from the loading-gangway. Then, with a squeak and a rush, piggy resents the interference and bolts forward, to find himself in the place where his master would have him. It may savour of irreverence to contrast such a manoeuvre with Sir Thomas Kedgbury's system of education; but if, in lieu of constantly pricking Frank onward, he had pulled him back from the path in which he wanted him to walk, he would have been more likely to succeed than by working out his wonderful plan. It is probable, too, that Dick Short, by taking too much trouble to instruct Frank as to the line of life he ought to follow, may have given him a push in the direction whither the power of association and environment, and the charm of Ethel Aylward's bright eyes had already begun to draw him. And Frank himself was made of material very easily moulded, provided the hand of the worker were not too much "en évidence." Because it was, in the case of Sir Thomas and Dick Short, their efforts had miscarried. Louis and Achille, and Carl and Gustav, had a temporary success, because they worked sincerely and without design. Lord St. Osyth made the greatest success of all; but then he called to his aid a power which few young men would have been able to fight against, when he sent Miss Aylward down with Sir Francis Kedgbury at that friendly little dinner-party.

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